

2-5998A

QUP

21 February 1952

Mr. Jack K. McFall
Assistant Secretary
Department of State
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. McFall:

This is in reply to your request of 7 February 1952 for certain information concerning foreign decorations for employees of the United States Government.

While this Agency has no formal procedure relating to the subject of foreign decorations, pertinent instructions are published annually for the information of all employees. These instructions require that any employee who learns that he has been recommended for any foreign decoration immediately report this fact, and provides for the delivery of any such reports to the Department of State by 30 December.

It is suggested that the following principles be used as guidance in reviewing individual awards:

- a. Whether the authorization or refusal of the award would cause embarrassment to the United States.
- b. Whether the acceptance of the award would prejudice the security of the individual or his mission.

This Agency has no cases now pending in the draft omnibus bill presently before Congress.

With reference to the alternatives listed in your proposal, this Agency would favor either:

- a. Legislation which would authorize the President to submit periodically lists of names of persons who have been tendered decorations; if Congress takes no action within a specified period of time, the Depart-

171

SEARCHED

INDEXED

SERIALIZED

FILED

171

171

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ment of State would then be authorized to transmit the awards to the recipients.

- b. Legislation which would grant blanket Congressional authorization for the receipt of decorations by specified classes or groups of officials or employees.

We would not favor legislation which would prohibit officers and employees of the Government from receiving any foreign decorations either as an outright prohibition or as a policy making an exception for certain classes or groups such as those actually engaged in combat.

With regard to your third possible alternative, this Agency would not recommend as a matter of U. S. policy that the President or individual Departments or Agencies take steps to prohibit its officers or employees from receiving decorations from foreign governments such as the prohibition which applies to Foreign Service Officers.

Sincerely,

W
WALTER REID WOLF
Deputy Director

AD/P:SB:bs

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